

Killing Edward by Gavin Harrison

KILLING EDWARD

BY

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Act One

Scene One.

A stormy Saturday Morning in a large Kitchen/Diner of the Watkins residence. 8.55am.

The garden is seen through the windows and glass panelled back door. Kitchen units and sink surround the upstage area under the large windows. On them are the usual Kitchen utensils including a block of knives. A large wooden table dominates half of the kitchen. There is a clutter of paper strewn across it. A Small bin is surrounded by screwed up pieces of paper, with none inside it.

The Kitchen is generally tidy, modern but with an old wood effect which gives it a very 'Earthy' look and feel. A round clock face hangs on the wall, instead of numbers, it has different birds which produces a different bird song for each hour. Although this clock is broken and the hands are stuck to "3:30", the birds still sing at the correct hour.

A bookcase stands near the exit of the kitchen leading into the rest of the house. There are a collection of photographs hanging next to the clock. They are photos of different birds, one photo includes a man, EDWARD, holding a Tawny Owl.

A Canary is heard singing in the hallway.

A slow crackle of thunder is heard outside.

SUE is sitting at the table. She is in a dressing gown and has a towel wrapped around her head. She is halfway through writing when she stops, screws up the paper and throws it toward the bin.

Before she starts again, she picks up the phone and dials.

Sue: Hello, yes, my name is Sue Watkins and I... yes that's right.... yes the oak wood... yes the brass handles... no I don't want it open, I can't understand why anybody would want... no not the executive lining... honestly does it really matter? I mean it's a coffin not a business class ticket to... I'm not, I just don't see the point in... yes, thank you, I'm sorry too... Yes, I'm just calling to make sure you've got him now because the last time we spoke, you...excuse me?... what do you mean you still... No I've organised the floral arrangement, can we get back to you saying you haven't received him yet?... Well that's just not good enough. May I remind you that his funeral is in two days and it would be rather odd that the only person who isn't there is the one we're burying. It'd be quite ironic for the man who was never late for anything in his life, to be late for his own funeral. Oh hang on a minute.

SUE writes down what she just said.

“Late for his own... funeral”... So the hospital hasn’t told you why?... Right.

SUE hangs up and redials.

Sue: Hello, yes my name is Sue Watkins and I... yes that’s right ‘Watkins’... Yes my husband... yes thank you I’m sorry too now would you care to explain why my husband’s body is still at the hospital and not at the... complications? What complications?... No, Edward was an avid supporter of organ donation he’d have donated his head if he could. Oh, hang on a minute...

SUE writes down what she just said.

Sue: “Would have donated his own...” stupid... no not you, I... if you could tell me the exact details as to why there is a hold up... No I’ve already told you he’s... no that’s not... is there something you’re not telling me because I really can’t take... Excuse me?... Really... Well you tell those officers that if they don’t come to their senses soon, they can pay for the bloody thing.

SUE hangs up.

Sue: Honestly.

She regains composure, sits back at the table and tries to continue writing, only to screw the paper up after a few more words and start again.

The front doorbell rings in a ‘Ding Dong’ fashion.

It rings again.

Sue: Pat, can you get that?

The doorbell rings again.

It rings for a Fourth time.

Sue: Patrick. I know you’re up can you get the door, please?

The doorbell rings continuously.

Sue: Right, alright. Fine. It’s fine.

SUE exits the kitchen into the house and answers the door to MAGGIE.

Maggie: (Off) I’m terribly sorry, I didn’t mean for it to go off like that. I just pressed it and it wouldn’t stop.

Sue: (Off) Right.

Maggie: (Off) I mean if I knew it was going to go off like that I would have knocked but I couldn't find-

Sue: (Off) -Well come on in, I can't hear you next to that thing going off.

Maggie: (Off) Thanks.

Sue: (Off) Make your way through to the kitchen and you can tell me all about the benefits of Tupperware.

Maggie: (Off) Oh, thank you. But I'm really-

Sue: (Off) -Just straight down the hallway there.

The front door closes.

MAGGIE enters the kitchen. She is a slender, attractive woman in a suit carrying an umbrella and a briefcase. She is followed in by SUE.

The Doorbell continues to ring.

Maggie: Thank you, It's terrible out there this morning.

Sue: That's the downside of selling Avon I suppose.

Maggie: Oh no, I'm not selling-

Sue: That blessed doorbell is driving me mad.

Maggie: Yes, I'm sorry about that it just-

Sue: - Hang on a tick, you can tell me all about the advantages of double glazing in a second.

Maggie: No I'm not here to-

Sue: -Just don't steal anything.

SUE leaves the Kitchen to fix the doorbell.

MAGGIE, somewhat flustered, regains composure and takes in her surroundings. She notices the clock and the photographs. She takes a keen interest on the photograph of EDWARD holding the Tawny Owl.

There is a banging sound. The doorbell stops ringing.

MAGGIE notices the Bird clock and moves the hands to the correct time, as she does, the Bird clock chimes 9am. The Blue Tit sings, which MAGGIE finds amusing.

SUE re-enters the Kitchen with the broken fascia of the doorbell. She stops for a second as she watches MAGGIE.

Sue: I'm surprised it didn't fall down.

Maggie: Pardon?

Sue: It usually only takes the slightest knock somewhere in the house and that clock comes crashing down. You're lucky it didn't fall on you.

Maggie: Yes.

Sue: Did you move the hands?

Maggie: I thought it was a bit fast.

Sue: It is what it is.

Maggie: It's just the hands on your clock were-

Sue: -and it's not yours.

Maggie: Did it belong to Edward?

Sue: I don't think I caught your name?

Maggie: That's because I didn't throw it. Maggie Thrapston. You must be Sue Watkins?

Sue: Maybe.

Maggie: Edwards wife?

Sue: ...Widow.

Maggie: Widow. Of course. I'm ever so sorry for your loss.

Sue: Yes, thank you. I'm sorry too.

Maggie: It must be terribly hard for you.

Sue: At least he went doing what he loved.

Maggie: Some might say that's the best way to go.

Sue: Oh I don't think so. I'd rather be asleep.

Maggie: Oh?

Sue: At least that way I'm not there when it happens.

Maggie: Right. It was rather sudden though wasn't it? How he died.

Sue: Head injuries have a tendency of being sudden.

Maggie: I take it he wasn't in any pain?

Sue: It was hard to tell really because he died. Death has a way of making communication slightly difficult, you see.

Maggie: Of course. It was a rather unique way to go though, don't you think?

Sue: It was quite a fall.

Maggie: Just I wouldn't have classed Bird Watching as something of a high risk activity.

Sue: Well a tree is a tree. If you climb up one, you can fall out of it.

Maggie: Maybe.

Sue: Sorry, "Maggie Thrapston", but at the risk of repeating myself: Who are you? And how did you know Edward?

Maggie: Actually I didn't. I never met him.

Sue: Well how did you recognise him?

Maggie: I work for his brother, Ralph.

Sue: Right.

Maggie: I'm his PA.

Sue: I see.

Maggie: His Personal Assistant.

Sue: Yes thank you I know what it means.

Maggie: It's amazing how similar they look.

Sue: Yes. Anyone would have thought they were twins.

Maggie: Oh I always thought they were? Oh... Of course... a joke.

Sue: That's right.

Maggie: Ralph has been devastated ever since he heard about the accident.

Sue: Clearly. That's why it's taken him nearly a week to get here.

Maggie: Well I only managed to get hold of him on Wednesday. He's away, you see.

Sue: Well didn't he have his mobile with him?

Maggie: He forgot it.

Sue: How ironic, seeing that's what he sells.

Maggie: Well I was thinking of emailing him, but thought it wasn't exactly tactful to say in an email that his brother had died and his funeral was in Five days.

Sue: No, I suppose not.

Maggie: What would I have put in the subject box?

Sue: Indeed. So is he still coming this weekend?

Maggie: Oh yes.

Sue: Good. So why are you here?

Maggie: I thought he could do with some support.

Sue: That's what family is for.

Maggie: I just want to make sure Ralph has a comfortable weekend, hassle free.

Sue: And you think I wouldn't be able to provide that?

Maggie: Oh no of course you could. It's just with-

Sue: -I mean it is *my* husbands' funeral on Monday.

Maggie: This is nothing personal.

Sue: Says the Personal Assistant.

Maggie: I'm not here to run anything, this is your call. It's just a big weekend for the business too and I want to make sure Ralph's got everything he needs. I'll be in the background, you won't even notice me.

Sue: How come he didn't take his personal assistant with him? I thought these managerial types never stray too far from their work?

Maggie: He knew I'd be able to manage everything while he was away.

Sue: I thought he had Roger for that.

Maggie: Roger Chamberlain? He's hardly the type to run this company.

Sue: And you are?

Maggie: Let's put it this way, there's a reason I have my own parking space and Roger doesn't.

Sue: He doesn't drive?

Maggie: It's a matter of principle. Anyway, there are some people who don't ditch a company when the going gets tough.

Sue: How do you mean?

Maggie: Roger; he's decided to abruptly sell his half of the business to an overseas investor.

Sue: Oh I see.

Maggie: It's for the best. This investor is a lot more in touch with what we do.

Sue: I'm sure.

Maggie: He's like me; he gets things done yesterday.

Sue: That's clever of him.

Maggie: So it's ok to stay then?

Sue: Move in, why don't you?

Maggie: Oh I'm not looking for anywhere to... I see... funny.

PATRICK enters the kitchen. He is EDWARD and RALPHS father. An elderly man in his early 80's. He is dressed in a red lumberjack shirt tucked into a pair of brown cord jeans.

Patrick: There was a bang. Is everything alright?

Sue: Everything's fine, Patrick.

Patrick: Is anyone hurt?

Sue: No we're fine. It was just the doorbell here.

Patrick: But it's broken.

Sue: I know.

Patrick: It's all in pieces.

Sue: It wasn't working.

Patrick: Well no wonder. Look at it!

Sue: It's fine, Pat.

Patrick: Oh, hello.

Maggie: Hello.

Patrick: Where have you been?

Maggie: I'm sorry?

Patrick: You're in one minute then disappear the next.

Maggie: Sorry I-

Patrick: Not to worry, at least we can go home now.

Maggie: Sorry I think you've got me confused with-

Sue: -Pat, this isn't your Elsie. She died, remember?

Patrick: Don't be silly, how can she be dead? She's right in front of me. She's right here. I'm sorry about the doorbell.

Maggie: It's my fault, really.

Patrick: Did you break it then?

Sue: No she didn't.

Patrick: Well why would you say it's your fault?

Maggie: I rang it.

Patrick: That's what they're made to do.

Maggie: There wasn't a knocker.

Patrick: That's why there's a bell.

Maggie: But it wouldn't stop ringing.

Patrick: I wondered what that noise was. I thought it was a police car going by. You know, it's the most excitement there's been around here in a long time.

Sue: Oh God.

Patrick: Do you know, you look just like my late wife.

Maggie: Elsie?

Patrick: Oh did you know her?

Maggie: No, you mentioned her earlier.

Patrick: Did I? Oh. Do you have the correct time?

Maggie: Well, I-

Patrick: -Good. Not many people do these days. It's such a waste of time. People walking around with broken watches or slow clocks, little do they know they're living in the wrong time.

Maggie: The wrong time?

Patrick: Oh yes. Yes. I try my best to fix it whenever I can. I still have the tools and the know-how. I'll always be a clock smith.

Maggie: You fix clocks?

Sue: He used to.

Patrick: I still do!

Sue: I didn't mean-

Patrick: -You can't take that away like you've taken everything else from me. You can't have my time.

Sue: Pat, I haven't taken your time.

Patrick: Keep an eye on her. She's one of them.

Maggie: Maybe you can have a look at your clock.

Patrick: Pardon?

Maggie: The bird clock. It's broken.

Patrick: You didn't touch my clock, did you?

Maggie: Well, I-

Patrick: -Don't touch my clock!

PATRICK approaches the bird clock and starts moving the hands to random times

Patrick: What was it? What was it? Why can't I... Oh come on...

Sue: -Three Twenty-Five, Pat.

Patrick: Was it? Yes. Yes that was it. Yes.

PATRICK puts the hands to the time "3.25"

Patrick: It's not to be touched.

Maggie: Right.

Patrick: Nobody should touch it.

Maggie: Of course.

Patrick: Just don't touch it. It's not to be touched.

Sue: She heard you, Pat.

Patrick: Yes. Well. Not to be touched.

Maggie: I won't.

Patrick: I'm sorry I don't think I caught your name?

Maggie: That's because I never threw it. Maggie, Maggie Thrapston.

Patrick: Oh, how clever. She never threw it, did you hear that, Sue?

Sue: Unfortunately.

Patrick: Absolute pleasure, my dear. Absolute pleasure. Now, do forgive me if I forget your name, I have this Alzheimer's, you see.

Maggie: I'm sorry.

Patrick: As long as I've got my family with me then we'll beat this together.

Maggie: I didn't know it can be-

Sue: -One day at a time, isn't that right, Pat.

Patrick: What? Oh yes. That's right. Yes.

Sue: Patrick is Edward's Father.

Maggie: Oh I see. Yes of course. I'm sorry for your loss, Patrick.

Patrick: My loss?

Maggie: About your son, Edward.